Shojo Beat Manga
Tail of the Moon
Story & Art by
Rinko Ueda
14

Tail of the Moon

Usagi is the granddaughter of the leader of a prestigious ninja village, but she's such a klutz that she's never made it out of the kiddie class. Frustrated with Usagi's lack of progress, her great-grandfather sends her to marry Lord Hanzo and have lots of ninja babies. But the lord has no interest in her or her childbearing potential!

Usagi must decide whether she'll continue to hold on to her feelings for Hanzo or give up and marry Yuki instead. She becomes even more torn when Yuki reveals that the mysterious ninja who saved Usagi earlier may have been Hanzo himself…!

14

Story & Art by

Rinko Ueda

A romantic ninja adventure!

Tail of the Moon

Chapter 92

Tail of the Moon

Volume 14

CONTENTS

Chapter 92 3

Chapter 93 29

Chapter 94 55

Chapter 95 81

Chapter 96 109

Chapter 97 135

Chapter 98 161

Glossary 186

Story Thus Far...

It is the Era of the Warring States. Usagi finally becomes a qualified ninja and marries Hanzo. But on the night of the wedding, Oda Nobunaga's army attacks their village! After leading Usagi to safety, Hanzo heads back to face the army. A few days later, Usagi returns to the village and is shocked to find Iga destroyed. She also hears that Hanzo is dead.

One year later, Usagi is working under Tokugawa Ieyasu at Okazaki Castle. She goes to Iga with her friend Yukimaru to investigate a rumor and is reunited with her great-grandpa, grandpa, and Goemon. Usagi then decides to marry Yukimaru when he tells her of his feelings for her

Later, Usagi visits the capital and is abducted by Ranmaru. But just as she is about to be killed, a mysterious ninja saves her and returns her to Yukimaru. Usagi believes that it was Yukimaru who saved her. Unable to tell her the truth, Yukimaru suddenly kisses her!

Tail of the Moon

14

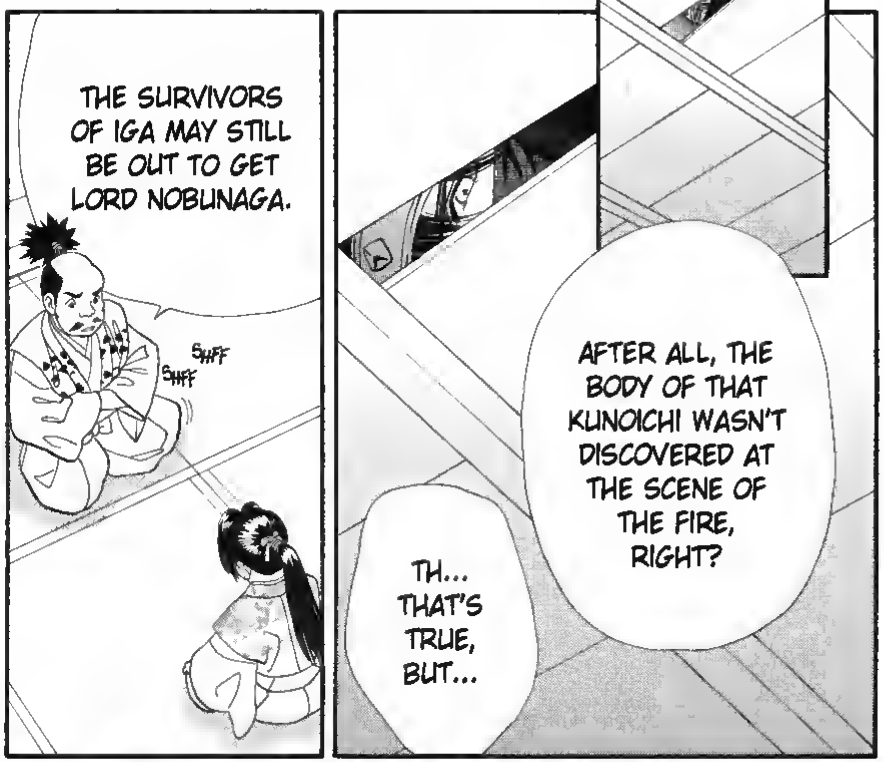
Story & Art by

Rinko Ueda

WHUP
OW...
MY MOUTH...
IT STILL HURTS...
I'M SO SORRY!!

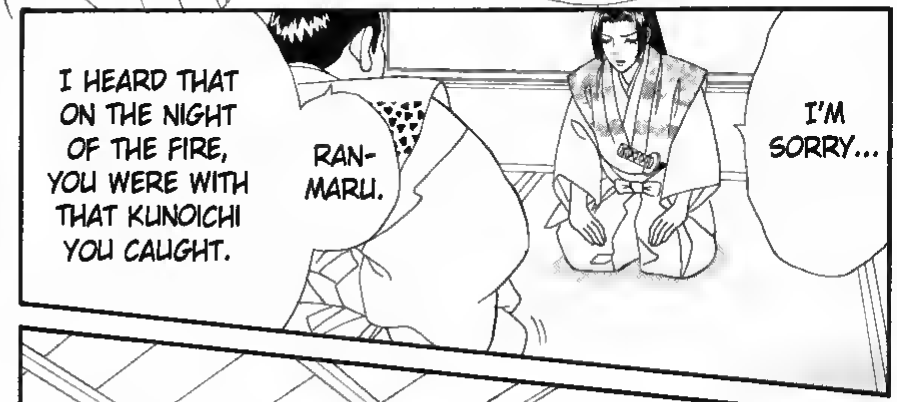
ZZT
...!!

"NO."
"HE ISN'T THE ONE..."
THE MOMENT YUKI'S LIPS TOUCHED ME...
...I KNEW WITHOUT A DOUBT...


THE SURVIVORS OF IGA MAY STILL BE OUT TO GET LORD NOBUNAGA.
SHFF
SHFF
AFTER ALL, THE BODY OF THAT KUNOICHI WASN'T DISCOVERED AT THE SCENE OF THE FIRE, RIGHT?
TH... THAT'S TRUE, BUT...

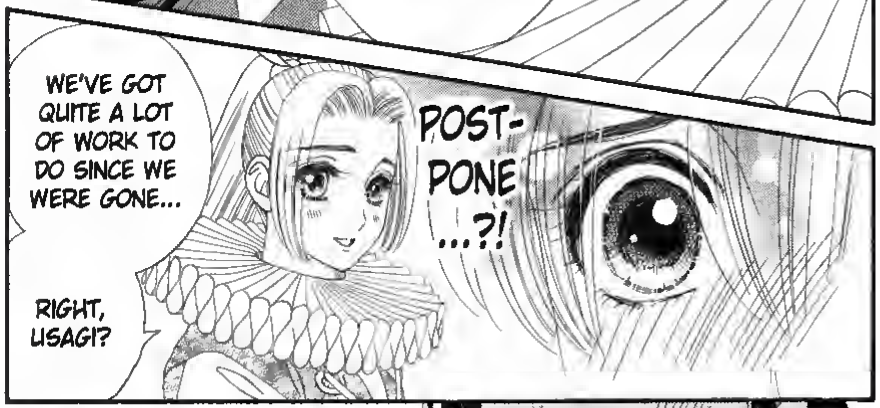
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, RANMARU.
YES...!

AZUCHI CASTLE TOWN
NOBUNAGA'S RETAINER SADANARI MURAI
EVER SINCE LORD NOBUNAGA BUILT THIS CASTLE IN AZUCHI, THERE HASN'T BEEN A SINGLE FIRE, YOU KNOW!!

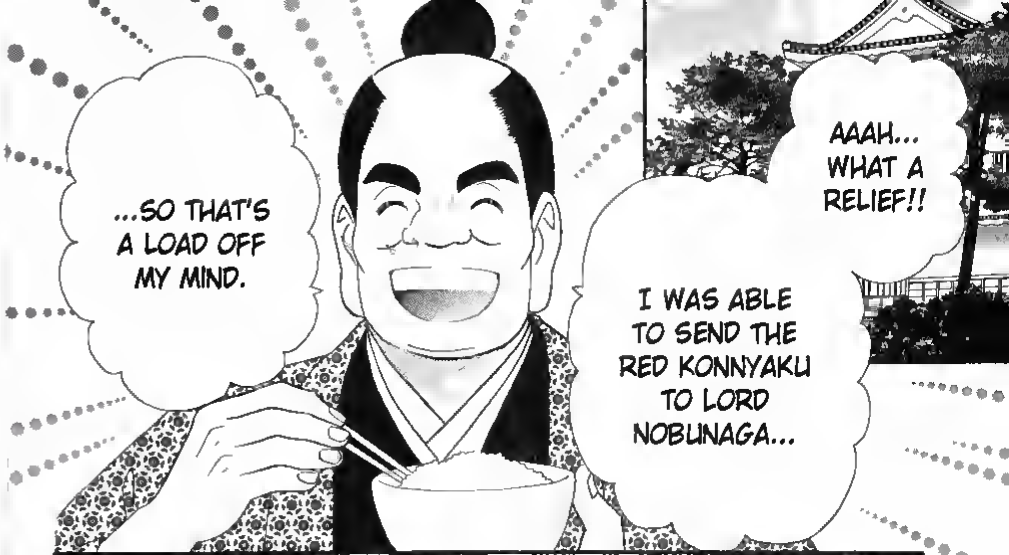

I HEARD THAT ON THE NIGHT OF THE FIRE, YOU WERE WITH THAT KUNOICHI YOU CAUGHT.
RAN-MARU.
I'M SORRY...

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
PERHAPS THE NINJA WHO CAME TO SAVE HER STARTED THAT FIRE?

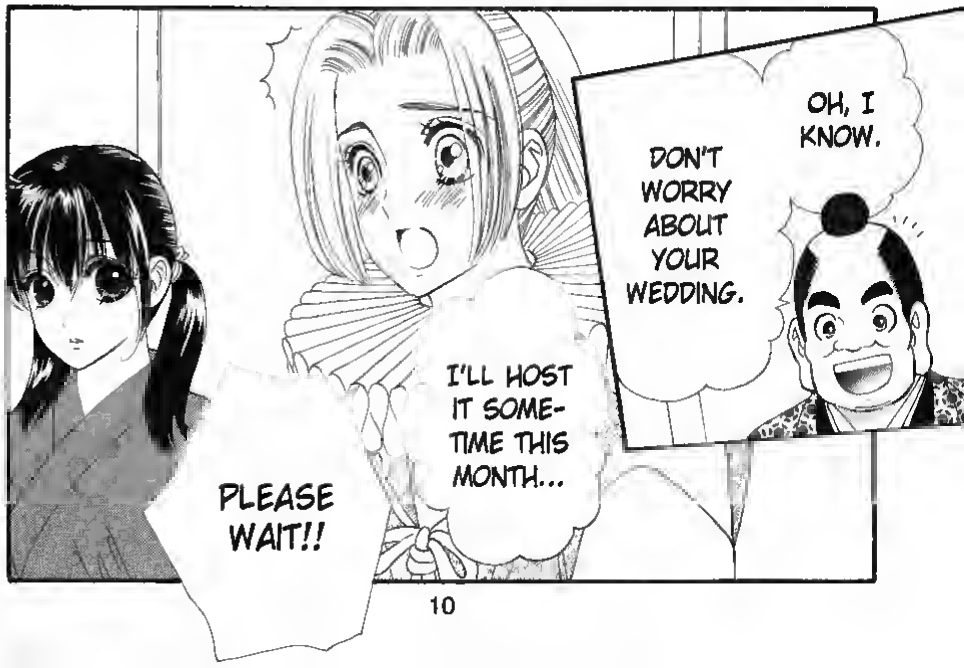
I'D LIKE TO...
...POSTPONE THE WEDDING FOR A WHILE.
HUH?


POST-PONE ...?!
WE'VE GOT QUITE A LOT OF WORK TO DO SINCE WE WERE GONE...
RIGHT, USAGI?

I FELT RELIEVED.
UH-HUH...


...SO THAT'S A LOAD OFF MY MIND.
I WAS ABLE TO SEND THE RED KONNYAKU TO LORD NOBUNAGA...
AAAH... WHAT A RELIEF!!

WHAT IS IT?
YOU BOTH SEEM SO UNHAPPY...


OH, I KNOW.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR WEDDING.
I'LL HOST IT SOME-TIME THIS MONTH...
PLEASE WAIT!!

I WAS TOLD SHE WENT PICKING HERBS...
SO WHERE COULD SHE BE...?
USAGI?
ZUFF
ZUFF
BUT IS IT RIGHT FOR ME TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIS KINDNESS LIKE THIS ...?
USAGI.

I CAN'T MARRY YUKI FEELING THE WAY I DO...
YUKI...
DID HE POSTPONE THE WEDDING FOR ME...?
"I WANT YOU TO CONTINUE BEING THE USAGI WHO LOVES HANZO."
YUKI SAID THAT BECAUSE HE'S KIND...
It's so bright..

HNGH...
OH...
YUKI?!
YOU WERE SLEEPING WELL.
WHEN...
...DID I FALL ASLEEP...?
I HAVE TO TELL HIM EVERY-THING...
I HAVE TO TELL HIM...
NO, NO. YOU GO FIRST, USAGI.
WHAT?
HUH?
YOU GO AHEAD, YUKI...
UH...
YUKI, ACTUALLY...
YOU KNOW, USAGI...

ZZZ...
ZZZ
USAGI...?
ZZZ
ZZZ...
HANZO...

I'M REALLY SORRY!!
IT'S JUST THAT IT DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT TO MARRY EACH OTHER...
...JUST BECAUSE WE CARE ABOUT ONE ANOTHER...
I'M REALLY, REALLY SORRY...
IT'S OKAY.
I CAME TO TELL YOU THAT WE SHOULD CALL OFF OUR WEDDING TOO.

I...
...DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY THIS, BUT...
I WANT...
...TO CALL OFF OUR WEDDING...
I'M SORRY, YUKI!!
I'M NOT SAYING THIS BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE YOU!!
I'M...

IT WASN'T ME.
UH-HUH...
BUT YOU SAVED ME, DIDN'T YOU, YUKI?
...YOU TOLD ME YOU DON'T REMEMBER HOW YOU ESCAPED, RIGHT?
WHEN YOU WERE CAPTURED BACK IN AZUCHI...
...A NINJA CARRYING YOU APPEARED BEFORE ME AND LEFT YOU IN FRONT OF ME.
JUST WHEN I LEFT THE LODGE TO LOOK FOR YOU...
A NINJA ...?

I'M SORRY...
I HAVE MORE TO SAY.
...AND LISTEN CAREFULLY.
CALM DOWN...
YUKI ?!
BECAUSE...
...I REALLY DO LOVE YOU, USAGI.

HIS FACE WAS COVERED, SO I COULDN'T SEE IT CLEARLY...
BUT I THINK...
...IT MAY HAVE BEEN HANZO.
I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE NOW.
IT COULD HAVE BEEN A DIFFERENT NINJA WHO JUST LOOKED LIKE HIM.
BUT...
...I JUST COULDN'T KEEP IT A SECRET FROM YOU...
SQUEEZE
THANK YOU FOR TELLING ME ABOUT IT.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD FOR YOU...
BUT THAT PERSON...
...PROBABLY ISN'T HANZO...

IF HANZO IS SOME-WHERE IN THIS WORLD...
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
I WANT...
...TO SEE HANZO...

IF HANZO WAS ALIVE...
...HE'D DEFINITELY COME SEE ME!!
ZUFF
ZUFF
USAGI...
IF HANZO WERE ALIVE...
...I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW HAPPY I'D BE.
AGH!
TRIP

WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY DID YOU STOP ALL OF A SUDDEN?
YES?
LORD IEYASU !!
I WANT TO GO TO AZUCHI WITH YOU!!
WHAT ?!
IF IT WERE HANZO ...

LORD IEYASU ...
I GOT THE HERBS YOU WANTED...
USAGI, CAN YOU HELP US WITH GETTING LORD IEYASU READY?
AH!
YOU MUST BE PATIENT, MY LORD.
HUMPH ...
GOOD-NESS...
IT'S ALWAYS SO SUDDEN.

I SHOULDN'T BRING UP THAT PLACE IN FRONT OF YOU...
OH, DEAR.
I'VE BEEN SUMMONED TO AZUCHI CASTLE SUDDENLY...
ARE YOU GOING SOME-WHERE?

AZUCHI...
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
IF HANZO REALLY WAS ALIVE...
...HE'D PROBABLY TRY TO GET REVENGE AGAINST NOBUNAGA...

I'VE COME FROM AZUCHI TO ACCOMPANY YOU.
I'M RANMARU MORI...
SHUP
RAN-MARU!!

LORD NOBUNAGA DESTROYED YOUR VILLAGE, SO WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO GO TO AZUCHI CASTLE?
BUT I'M AN HERBALIST NOW, SO...
NO. NO, NO, NO.
YOU'RE A NINJA! HOW CAN WE TAKE YOU WITH US?!

SOMETHING YOU WANT TO FIND OUT...?

ABSOLUTELY NOT!!
UNLESS YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT REVENGE ...?!
THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO FIND OUT...

HUH?
ARE YOU READY?
!!

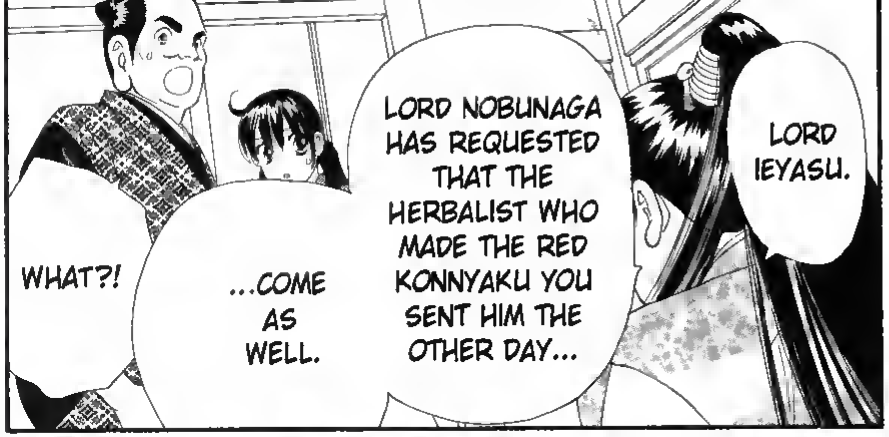
Tail of the Moon

Chapter 93

LET'S GO!

LITTLE HANZO

MMM.
HMPH.
THANKS TO SUZUNE'S EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE, HANZO'S PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STRENGTH GRADUALLY BECAME STRONG...
...
HOW-EVER ...
I WON'T LIE!!
LYING IS A PART OF A NINJA'S JOB.
LOOK ...
IT'S WRONG TO LIE.
HEH HEH HEH.
THAT'S YOUR WEAK SPOT, HANZO.
WHO'S THERE?!
CHATTER CHATTER
FOOLISHLY HONEST NINJA ARE DOWNRIGHT MEANING-LESS, YOU KNOW.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FLEXIBLE?
HAN... ZOU...?!


LORD IEYASU.
LORD NOBUNAGA HAS REQUESTED THAT THE HERBALIST WHO MADE THE RED KONNYAKU YOU SENT HIM THE OTHER DAY...
...COME AS WELL.
WHAT?!

TH...THEN I'LL HAVE HER GET READY. PLEASE WAIT FOR A WHILE.
ALL RIGHT.

ARE YOU SURE I'M SUPPOSED TO WEAR SUCH A NICE KIMONO?!
YOU'RE GOING TO SEE LORD NOBUNAGA, SO YOU'VE GOT TO BE PROPERLY DRESSED.
THIS IS NERVE-WRACKING ...
HUFF HUFF
USAGI... TELL ME SOME-THING.
WHAT'S THE REASON YOU TO WANT TO GO TO AZUCHI FOR...?

"I'VE COME FROM AZUCHI TO ACCOMPANY YOU."
RAN-MARU ?!
I CAN'T TAKE YOU TO AZUCHI WITH ME!
BUT...
THAT IS AN ORDER!!

I WANT TO GO WITH YOU, BUT I'VE GOT MY WORK HERE TOO, SO...
IT'S OKAY, YUKI.
THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING...
AND... ...I'M SORRY...
DON'T LOOK DOWN...
YOU LOOK THE BEST WHEN YOU'RE LOOKING UP... ...AND SMILING.
YUKI...

WHAT?!
I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE. BUT IF HE IS ALIVE, HE'LL PROBABLY GO AFTER NOBUNAGA FOR REVENGE, SO...
EXCUSE ME.
REVENGE ...?!
YUKI!!
USAGI...
YOU'RE GOING TO AZUCHI, RIGHT?
HANZO IS ALIVE ?!

EVEN THOUGH THE ROAD MAY BE ROUGH...
...I'M NOT AFRAID IF IT LEADS TO HANZO.
USAGI...
GOOD LUCK...

HANZOU...
PLEASE TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER.
I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN...
...BUT ONCE WE ENTER AZUCHI, THERE WILL BE A LIMIT AS TO HOW MUCH WE CAN DO TO PROTECT HER.
YES!!
YOU STILL WANT TO COME WITH US THOUGH, RIGHT?

SIGH...
I'M WORRIED...
WHAT IF LORD NOBUNAGA FINDS OUT THAT USAGI USED TO BE A NINJA...?
MY LORD?
CLIP
CLOP
IS HE UP TO SOMETHING AGAIN?
HUG
I HAVE TO STAY NEAR HANZOU AND THE OTHERS.
MY LORD...
I USED TO BE A NINJA AS WELL...
HA HA
I FORGOT ABOUT THAT.
THAT'S RIGHT!

IF YOU'RE UNCOMFORT-ABLE, YOU CAN RIDE THE PALANQUIN INSTEAD.
IT'S SO UNCOMFORT-ABLE RIDING IN THIS POSITION...
OW...
ALL RIGHT, BUT PLEASE DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO MUCH.
I'M FINE.

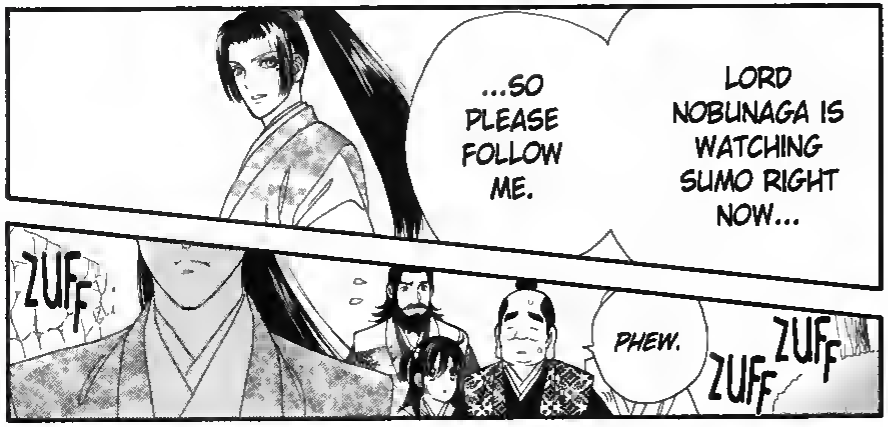
...AZUCHI.
NOBU-
NAGA'S
...
HUFF
HUFF
KAW
KAW
ALL THOSE LOVED ONES THAT NOBUNAGA KILLED...

I'M FINE!
IT'S NOT JUST A PLACE WHERE MY ENEMIES ARE...
WE CAN TURN BACK IF YOU WANT.
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
USAGI...

HANZOU...
HAVE WE ARRIVED AT AZUCHI?
YEAH.
YOU NOTICED, HUH?
CLOP
CLOP
THE WIND CHANGED
...
SHAA

I CAN SMELL THE ENEMY.

I'LL RUB SOME OINTMENT ON IT.
RUB RUB
I GUESS I STILL NEED TO LOSE A BIT MORE WEIGHT...
I TWISTED MY BACK WHEN I GOT OFF THE HORSE...
OWW...
WHAT'S WRONG, LORD IEYASU?!


...SO PLEASE FOLLOW ME.
LORD NOBUNAGA IS WATCHING SUMO RIGHT NOW...
ZUFF
PHEW.
ZUFF ZUFF

OOOH
NOKOTTA...
NOKOTTA !!

HANZO MIGHT BE HERE IN AZUCHI TOO.

AAGH!
下馬
DISMOUNT

HMM...
LORD IEYASU HAS ARRIVED...
MY LORD...
MFF
MFF
SILENCE
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
WHO SHOULD I HAVE GO UP AGAINST HIM NEXT ...?
MY LORD ...?

WH...!
WHUMP
...
HYAAAH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
UME-NO-WAKA SURE IS STRONG, ISN'T HE!
OH.
CLAP
CLAP
HMPH.
WINNER...
UME-NO-WAKA!!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR INVITING ME...
LONG TIME NO SEE!
LORD IEYASU ...
MMF.
ZZT
ZZT

BLOSH
...NOKOTTA!!
MITSU-HIDE...
OOH.
MITSUHIDE IS PRETTY GOOD.
HE WAS THE ONLY PERSON AMONG NOBUNAGA'S RETAINERS WHO WAS AGAINST THE ATTACK ON IGA...
UME-NO-WAKA.
IF YOU WIN THIS MATCH, I'LL GIVE MITSUHIDE'S SAKAMOTO CASTLE TO YOU.

TMP
TMP
TRIP
OOF.
FWUMP
MITSUHIDE?
MITSUHIDE.
GO!
YES, SIR!
SHA
I'M SORRY, MY LORD.
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER ...
...MITSUHIDE!
HAKKEYOI...
ARE HIS EYES GETTING BAD AGAIN?
MITSUHIDE...

THAT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU JOKE ABOUT!!
HOW COULD HE?!
PHEW
YOU FOOL...
CRUNCH
HUFF HUFF
I WAS ONLY JOKING.
IEYASU, YOU'RE NEXT!
OW...
Y... YES...
ZZT
I'M SORRY, BUT LORD IEYASU HURT HIS BACK A MOMENT AGO, AND...
YOU MUSTN'T DO IT...
I'M FINE...
NGH.
ZZT
HURRY UP!!

WHAT A HORRIBLE ...!!
GIVE HIM HIS CASTLE ...?!
?!
SAKAMOTO CASTLE...?!
MURMUR
MURMUR
MITSUHIDE...
HUURGH...
DO YOUR BEST...!
LIFT
UNGH!
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO GIVE SAKAMOTO CASTLE TO UME-NO-WAKA...?!
MY LORD...
HA.
MITSUHIDE !!
WOOSH

MY LORD...
THAT GIRL IS...
HEY, THAT GIRL ...!!
DO AS HE SAYS.
WHY NOT?!
YOU MUSTN'T ENTER THE RING!
A NINJA?
MY LORD, WHAT ARE YOU ...?
TOSS
CATCH
A walnut ?
...
FLIP
FLIP
SHAAA
WHY CAN'T I DO IT...?
TOSS
RAR
RAR

THEN...
...I'LL SUBSTITUTE FOR LORD IEYASU!!

I'VE HAD ENOUGH.
YOU COWARD.
IT'S COWARDLY TO ATTACK SOMEONE FROM BEHIND AND THEN LAUGH ABOUT IT!!
I'VE LAUGHED SO MUCH THAT I'M THIRSTY NOW...
AHHH...
WATER...

WHONK
AGH!
OWWW!! WHAT WAS THAT...?
Mmft
RAN-MARU ...
WHAT KIND OF NINJA IS THAT?
HA HA HA HA
ER...
NINJA ?!
LORD NOBUNAGA ...
THIS GIRL IS FROM IGA, BUT SHE IS CURRENTLY WORKING AS MY HERBALIST...
IEYASU, I KNOW YOU'RE FOND OF THE NINJA...
...BUT COULDN'T YOU FIND SOMEONE BETTER THAN HER?!
HA HA HA HA

AH!
LET GO OF HER.
SHOVE
YOU...!!
USAGI...
SHA
YEEAAGH!

I HA—
STOP IT!!
MMGH
IT'S DESPICABLE!
YOU MUST APOLOGIZE !!
AND I REALLY, REALLY HATE YOU!!
HOW DARE YOU TALK LIKE THAT...
...TO OUR LORD...?!

LET'S GO!

LITTLE HANZO

WOW... I GUESS HANZOU WAS A BORN NINJA!! LITTLE HANZO, HANG IN THERE...!

HEH.

AH. YOU FINALLY NOTICED THEN, HANZO?

WERE YOU DECEIVING US WITH ALL YOUR BABY TALK THEN?!

WHAT, AND YOU THINK I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU FOR FREE?

HMM... WHAT SHALL I ASK FOR IN RETURN?

YOU'VE GOT TO TEACH ME HOW TO LIE LIKE YOU!!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

NOW HURRY UP AND TEACH ME!!

YAY! ♪

HAVE SOME OF THE HANZO FAMILY'S SPECIAL SYRUP!

LICK

SWA

HANZO'S DAYS OF PHYSICAL TRAINING CONTINUE ...

HUH ?!

HANZO... HOW DARE YOU SECRETLY EAT THAT ...?

AAAAH♡

WHY DID YOU INTERRUPT ME?!
RANMARU...
...
WHAT OBJECTION DO YOU HAVE IN TEACHING THIS RUDE KUNOICHI A LESSON?!
KEE...
WELL...

STOP IT!!

SHUP
IT'S FINE.
WHAT...?
SADANARI.
PUT YOUR SWORD AWAY.
TH...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
IEYASU.
WE'LL BE HAVING YOUR FAVORITE TEMPURA FOR DINNER TODAY, SO LOOK FORWARD TO IT.
TMP
TMP
I DIDN'T GET KILLED ...
FA-
WHUMP
KEE...?
I...

KEEE...
GLOM
NGH.
TMP
MOSUKE !!
I NEVER TAMED HIM!!
KEE...
THIS KUNOICHI TAMED MOSUKE WHEN SHE SNUCK INTO AZUCHI CASTLE LAST TIME!!
WHY IS MOSUKE...?

IF I AM TO BE PUNISHED...
...ALL OF MY RETAINERS AND THE PEOPLE OF MY LAND ARE GOING TO LOSE THEIR LIVELIHOOD.
OUR JOB IS TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT OUR LAND.
DON'T EVER...
...TALK BACK TO LORD NOBUNAGA AGAIN.
YES...

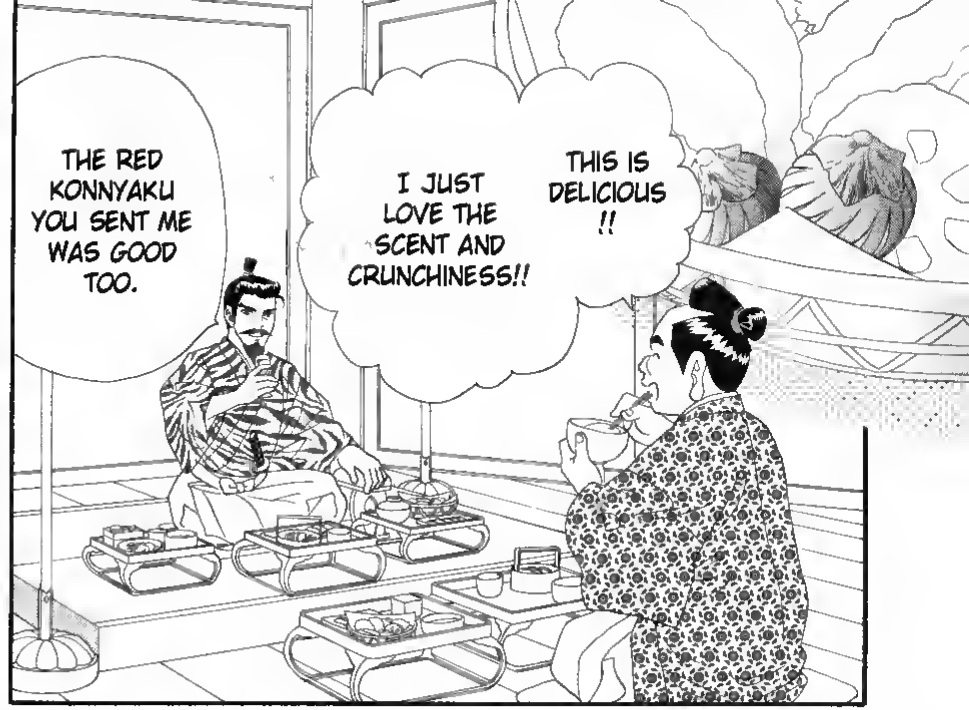
YOU IDIOT!

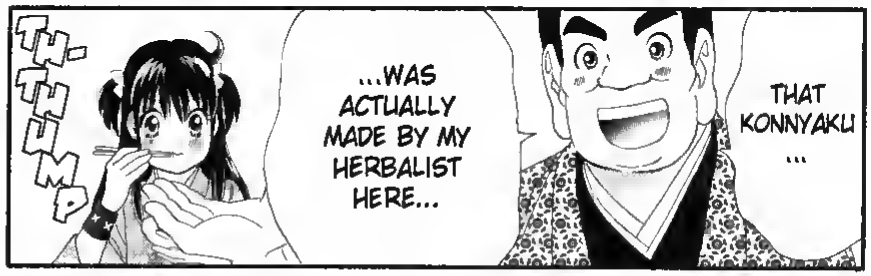
KEE...
I'M SORRY...
JUST IMAGINE WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF MOSUKE HADN'T APPEARED...!!
YOU NEARLY GAVE ME A HEART ATTACK!!

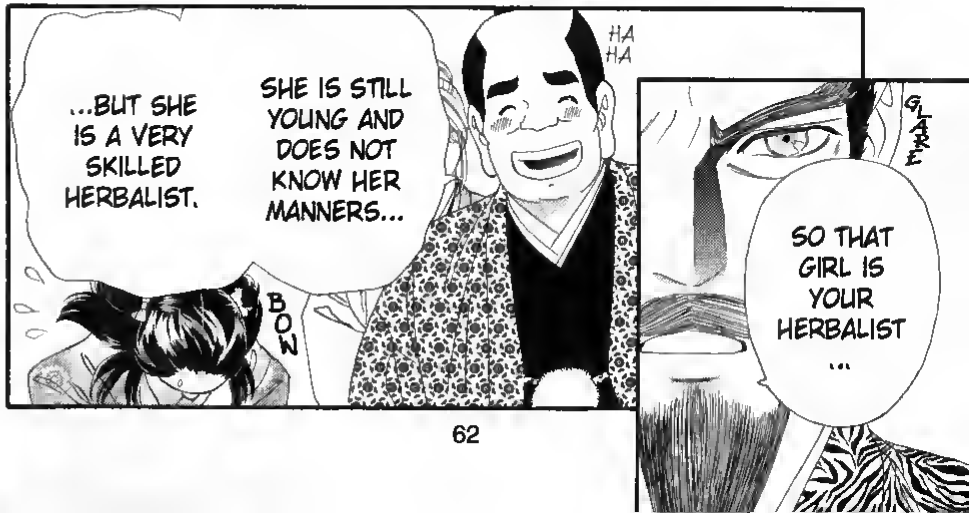
MY SERVANT'S BLUNDER IS *MY* BLUNDER.

LISTEN WELL, USAGI...
LORD IEYASU...

THANK YOU.
LET ME POUR YOU SOME SAKE.
EARLIER...
...I SURVIVED IN PART BECAUSE RANMARU STOPPED THE OTHERS.
STOP IT!!
I THOUGHT RANMARU WANTED TO KILL ME THOUGH...
IS THAT SO?
I...I CAN'T DRINK, SO...
DO YOU WANT SOME TOO?

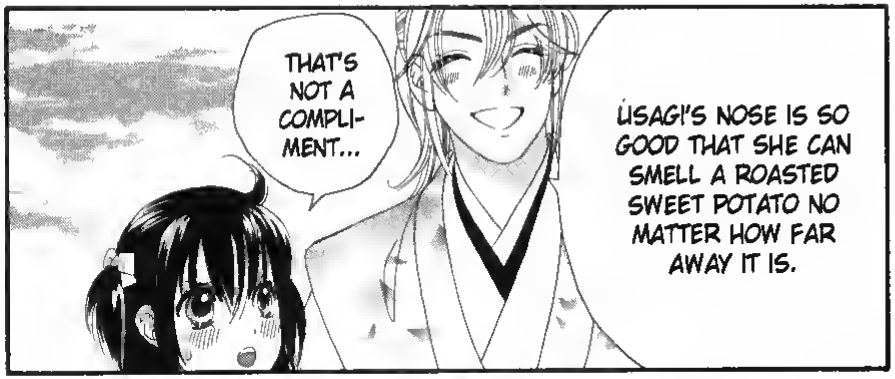

THE RED KONNYAKU YOU SENT ME WAS GOOD TOO.
I JUST LOVE THE SCENT AND CRUNCHINESS!!
THIS IS DELICIOUS !!


TU-TU-MP
...WAS ACTUALLY MADE BY MY HERBALIST HERE...
THAT KONNYAKU ...


...BUT SHE IS A VERY SKILLED HERBALIST.
SHE IS STILL YOUNG AND DOES NOT KNOW HER MANNERS...
HA HA
BOW
GLARE
SO THAT GIRL IS YOUR HERBALIST ...

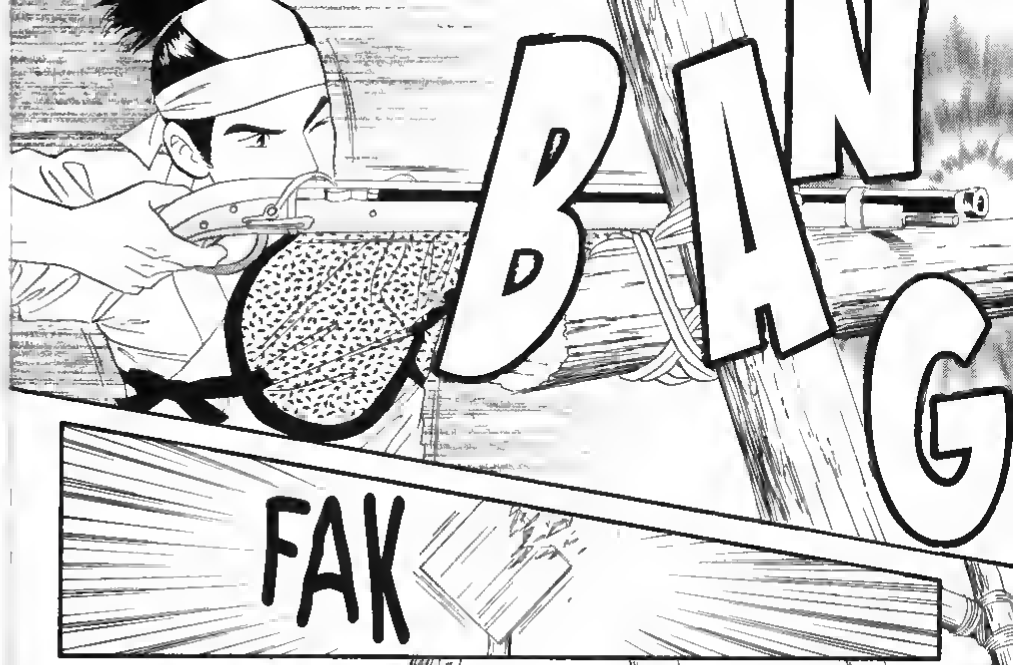
THEN WHY...?
RAN...
...MARU...
THANK YOU...
...FOR HELPING ME OUT EARLIER...
I ONLY DID IT BECAUSE MOSUKE FAVORS YOU.
SO THAT'S WHY...
OH.

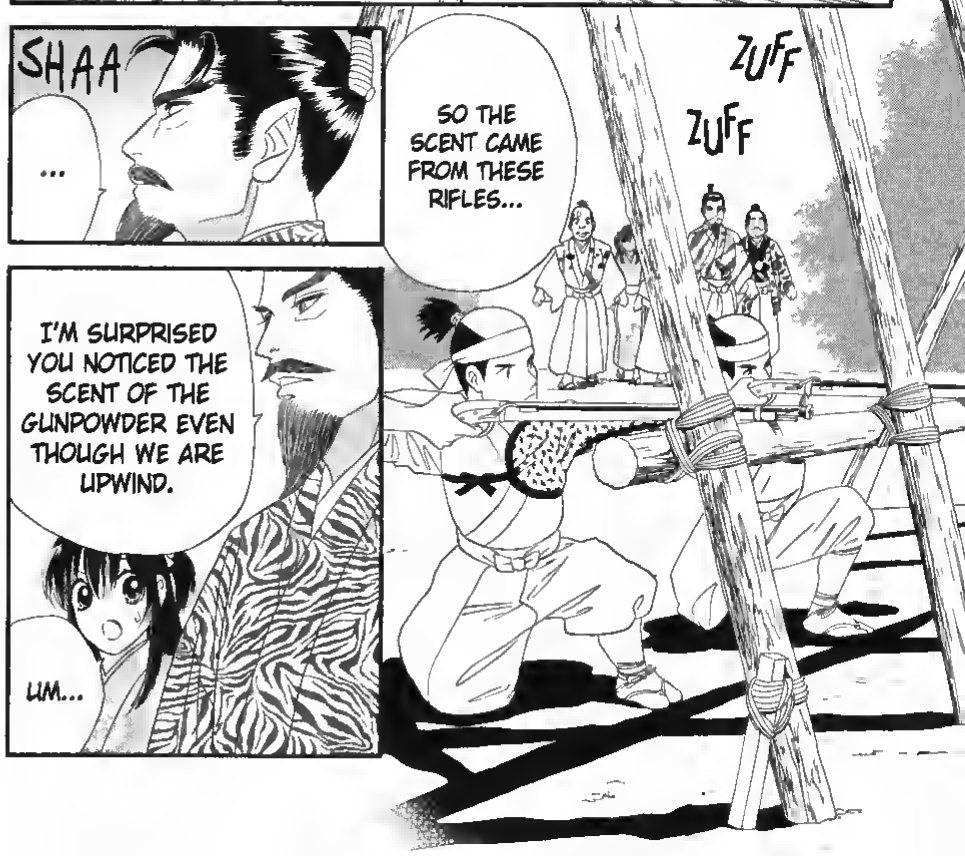
THE NEXT DAY
THIS CASTLE IS SO LARGE THAT I'D PROBABLY GET LOST IN IT.
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I STILL GET LOST EVERY NOW AND THEN.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HEY...
HAHA.
YOU DO?!
I SMELL GUNPOWDER.
SNIFF SNIFF
GUN-POWDER ?!
OH DEAR, OH DEAR...
THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT.
HOW CAN ANY-ONE BE USING GUNPOWDER HERE?! WE'VE GOT TO INVESTIGATE...


THAT'S NOT A COMPLI-MENT...
USAGI'S NOSE IS SO GOOD THAT SHE CAN SMELL A ROASTED SWEET POTATO NO MATTER HOW FAR AWAY IT IS.

A NINJA'S NOSE...
AH.

Y...YES.
WE'LL GO HUNTING TOMORROW WITH FALCONS AND THESE GUNS.
IEYASU.


BANG
FAK


SHAA
...
SO THE SCENT CAME FROM THESE RIFLES...
ZUFF
ZUFF
I'M SURPRISED YOU NOTICED THE SCENT OF THE GUNPOWDER EVEN THOUGH WE ARE UPWIND.
UM...

FA
BAN
G
SHUP
K

SHWAA
SHWAA
SHWAA
SHWAA

IT'S ALREADY BEEN THREE DAYS SINCE WE CAME HERE...
...YET I STILL HAVEN'T DISCOVERED ANYTHING ABOUT HANZO.
HANZO MIGHT BE ALIVE.
AND IF HE IS, HE'D DEFINITELY COME TO GET REVENGE AGAINST NOBUNAGA.
THAT'S WHY I CAME HERE...
...BUT THINGS AREN'T GOING THE WAY I WANT THEM TO...

THE NEXT DAY
I'M FINE NOW!
MY LORD... HOW IS YOUR BACK TODAY?
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.
OH...
ARE YOU READY?
LORD IEYASU...
LET'S GO, USAGI.
WHAT?
I'M GOING TOO?
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOU HERE ALONE.
O... OKAY...
I WAS GOING TO LOOK FOR CLUES ABOUT HANZO WHILE EVERYBODY WAS AWAY...

THE NUMBER OF GUARDS SURROUNDING HIM ARE JUST OVER-WHELMING.
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY FOR ANY ASSASSIN TO GET NEAR HIM WITH SO MANY GUARDS...

ZUFF
ZUFF
VISH
GO.
...SO... THERE'S AN INTERESTING HERB GROWING HERE...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, USAGI?

WHAT?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?

WHAT IS IT?

BANG

HM?

I SMELL GUNPOWDER AGAIN...
IT MUST BE THE PILOT LIGHT I'M HOLDING.
SWISH
SWISH

IT'S SIMILAR BUT DIFFERENT.
IT'S NOT THAT SMELL.

COULD IT BE ...?
IT CAME FROM THE FOREST!!
YES, SIR.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
USAGI.
TREAT LORD NOBUNAGA'S WOUND!!
Y...
...YES, SIR!!
ASSASSIN...
RAR RAR
HURRY UP AND CAPTURE THAT ASSASSIN!!
I...

VISH
LORD NOBUNAGA !!
MY LORD !!

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS...!!
FWOOM

THE RETURN OF...
A JAPANESE RHINOCEROS BEETLE WILL HAVE STOMACH TROUBLE IF YOU FEED IT WATERMELON.
HANZO'S TRIVIA
Tail of the Moon
Chapter 95

LET'S GO!

LITTLE HANZO

WHOA, HANZOU REALLY IS SOMETHING... IS THAT WHY HANZO BECAME SUCH A SERIOUS PERSON? I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT ONE!

NICE TO MEET YOU. MY NAME IS HATTORI HANZO...
HANZO FROM IGA IS HERE TOO...
I'M HOOOME!
HANZO VISITED OKAZAKI TO LEARN ABOUT THE TECHNIQUES OF DECEPTION FROM HANZOU...
AAAH...
MY DEAR HANZOU... ♡♡
I MISSED YOU, HANZOU...
WELCOME HOME, HANZOU. ♡
WH... WHICH ONE IS YOUR MOTHER, HANZOU?
THESE ARE ALL MY GIRL-FRIENDS.
JEALOUS
HANZO'S TRAINING CONTINUES ON...
GIRL-FRIENDS ...?!

LET'S GO!

LITTLE HANZO

I'M WORRIED ABOUT HANZO AND HANZOU... WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM AFTER THIS, AND WHY HAVE THEY TURNED OUT THE WAY THEY ARE NOW?! FIND OUT NEXT TIME!

YOU JOIN US TOO. ♡
I'M ALL SWEATY...
HUH?
OH MY, LETS TAKE A BATH THEN.
NO, THANK YOU!!
PARADISE~
SCRUB SCRUB
DO YOU WANT ME TO WASH YOUR BACK...?
HA HA HA HA HA HA
HEY, HANZO!
FEARFUL CREATURES WITH ROUND BODIES THAT SHOW NO INDICATION OF THE DEVASTATING PUNCHES THEY WILL ATTACK YOU WITH...
WOMEN...
LET'S PLAY.
HANZO'S DISTRUST OF WOMEN CONTINUES ON...
WHO KNOWS WHEN THEIR KINDLY FACES WILL TURN INTO THAT OF A DEMON...?
HAHAHAHA

WHAT IF IT WAS HANZO?
WHAT IF...? ...
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
IT'S UNLIKELY BECAUSE A NINJA WOULD NOT USE A RIFLE THAT GIVES OFF A SCENT.
SO IT'S NOT HIM...?
I SEE...
YES?
IEYASU.
GIVE ME THIS HERBALIST.
AT ANY RATE, IT'S A GOOD THING WE HAVE USAGI TO HELP.
I'M KIND OF HAPPY AND SAD AT THE SAME TIME...

FIND THE ASSASSIN EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO BURN THE MOUNTAIN DOWN!!
WHAT ?!
WE'VE COMBED THE MOUNTAINS, BUT...
I'M VERY SORRY.

WE WON'T BURN IT, MY LORD.
Y...YES, SIR...
I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO START A FIRE IN MY HUNTING GROUNDS.

I JUST NEED TO STERILIZE IT AND THEN PUT SOME OINTMENT ON IT.
IT'S NOT AS DEEP AS IT LOOKS.
HOW IS LORD NOBUNAGA'S WOUND?

DO YOU THINK THE ASSASSIN IS AN IGA NINJA SURVIVOR?
THANK GOOD-NESS...

WHAAAAAT?!
GOOD.
AS YOU WISH, LORD NOBUNAGA...

SHAKE
SHAKE
DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

LET'S RETURN TO AZUCHI CASTLE FOR NOW.
NO ONE CAN TALK BACK TO LORD NOBUNAGA...

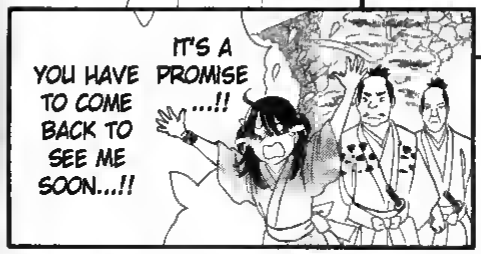
TUG
I'M ASKING YOU TO TURN HER OVER TO ME.
...TO YOU ...?
GIVE HER...
HUH?!
?!
SAY "NO," LORD IEYASU ...!!
YES, BUT...
B... BUT THIS HERBALIST USED TO BE A NINJA, SO...
EEEEK
ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE HER TO ME OR NOT?
SHE'S AN HERBALIST NOW, ISN'T SHE?

GLOOM
LORD NOBUNAGA IS A TEMPERAMENTAL MAN, BUT HE ISN'T A BAD PERSON.
USAGI...
IF YOU WORK FOR HIM WITH GOODWILL, HE WILL REPAY YOU WITH GOODWILL...
BUT...
...I'M SCARED...
USAGI...

NOW, USAGI...
TUP
NOOOOO...
THAT WAS THE PLAN FROM THE START.
YOU'RE ALL GOING BACK TO OKAZAKI TOMORROW?!
...!!
WHAT ...?!
NO MATTER HOW UN-REASONABLY YOU'RE TREATED, YOU MUST BEAR IT.
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO SCARE HER IF YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
FATHER ...
GOT THAT? ...
IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY...
USAGI.
JUST SOME WORDS OF ADVICE FOR HER TO GET ALONG HERE.
WHAT DID YOU TELL HER?
DO I REALLY HAVE TO SAY THAT...?
STHOCK

I'M NOT SURE IF I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO MAKE IT HERE...
I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT!
I'M GOING TO BE WORKING HERE STARTING TODAY...
MITSUHIDE ...
DASH
SHA
MITSU-HIDE !!

There, there.
HUG
YOU'RE MAKING IT TOO HARD FOR ME TO LET YOU GO WHEN YOU CRY LIKE THAT!!
URGH.
WE'LL COME TO SEE YOU AS OFTEN AS WE CAN...


YOU HAVE TO COME BACK TO SEE ME SOON...!!
IT'S A PROMISE ...!!

MAYBE SHE'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT ASSASSIN FROM YESTERDAY...
I HEARD SHE'S AN EX-NINJA...
PSST
PSST

THE NEXT DAY
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

Shoo
VUP
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE IN DANGER...
...
IS SAKAMOTO MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN ME?!

OH...
MAKE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR HIM ...?
MITSU...
DON'T.
HE IGNORED ME?!
RANMARU...
TH-THUMP
YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR HIM IF THE OTHERS FIND OUT HIS CONNECTION WITH YOU.
PLEASE COME BY TO CHANGE LORD NOBUNAGA'S BANDAGE AFTER DINNER.
I'M VERY SORRY!!
SO YOU WERE BACK IN SAKAMOTO WHILE I WAS GOING THOUGH SO MUCH TROUBLE...?

I'M SORRY.
OW.
IT HURTS, DOESN'T IT.
FUU...
FUU...
FUU...
HUH?
TUG
LORD NOBUNAGA?

I'M SORRY, MY LORD.
I'M PUTTING YOU ON PROBATION FOR A WHILE.
MY EYE...
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOUR FACE.

"NO MATTER HOW UNREASONABLY YOU'RE TREATED, YOU MUST BEAR IT."
NO...
"DON'T TALK BACK TO LORD NOBUNAGA."
SOME-BODY ...
BUT I CAN'T...
I'M...
...A POISONOUS GIRL.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?
...YOUR LIFE WILL BE IN DANGER...
IF YOU MAKE LOVE TO ME...
YOU MUSTN'T...

!!
I'M GOING TO MARK YOU AS MINE.
NGH...
NO...

TMP
TMP
VERY WELL.
YOU CAN GO.
DO YOU WANT ME TO CALL ONE OF YOUR CONCUBINES?
MY LORD...
SHA
EVEN SO MUCH AS A KISS WOULD BE DEADLY ENOUGH TO KILL YOU.
...AND HAVE WORN CLOTHING THAT HAS POISONOUS LEAVES WOVEN INTO THEM.
I DRANK POISONED MILK AS A BABY...
POISON-OUS?!
SO I, MYSELF, AM "POISONOUS."

EVEN IF I HAVE TO GO THROUGH ALL THIS HARDSHIP...
I...
I DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE.
...THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT I'LL FIND ANYTHING ABOUT HANZO...

TMP
TMP
"IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN, SAY YOU ARE A POISONOUS GIRL TO GET AROUND IT."
"LISTEN, USAGI..."

ZWAK
I'M SCARED...
HANZOU'S ADVICE REALLY WORKED...
HUFF
HUFF
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO USE IT SO SOON...

IF YOU DO ANYTHING TO ME...
...I'M GOING TO TELL LORD NOBUNAGA ABOUT IT.
I CAME TO SEE FOR MYSELF WHETHER YOU TRULY ARE A POISONOUS GIRL OR NOT...
THEN I CAN REPORT TO HIM ABOUT YOUR LIE.
STOP IT...

IF EVEN SO MUCH AS A KISS WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM...
...I WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD SEVERAL TIMES BY NOW.
RANMARU...
ZWAK
WH...
WHAT...?

SHA
THAT'S...!
KEE ?
I MADE IT...
THANK YOU SO MUCH, MOSUKE ...
KEE...

MOSUKE ...
WHERE DID YOU GET THIS?!
THAT'S HANZO'S ARMBAND!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
A LETTER !!
WHERE DID YOU FIND IT...?
!!

DASH
KEEE!!

PLEASE STOP THAT...!
MOSUKE...
KEE
KEEE

KEE
KEE
ZN/K
ZN/K
RAN-MARU ...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
NOTHING, REALLY...

IT'S NOTHING.
KEE
KEE
TMP
TMP
WHAT'S GOING ON?!

GO BACK TO
OKAZAKI, IF NOT,
I WILL CONSIDER YOU
MY ENEMY AS WELL.
I'M...
...HANZO'S ENEMY?!

IT'S HANZO'S HAND-WRITING!!
"GO BACK TO... ...OKA-ZAKI"?
GO BACK TO
OKAZAKI, IF NOT,
I WILL CONSIDER YOU
SNIFF...
NGH...
SO HE REALLY IS ALIVE!!
IF...
...NOT...?
RUSTLE

HANZO'S TRIVIA
THE KANJI FOR "SMOKE SIGNAL" IS WRITTEN AS 狼煙 (WOLF SMOKE) BECAUSE THE SIGNAL IS CREATED THROUGH BURNING DRIED STRAW AND WOLF DUNG
Tail of the Moon
Chapter 96

LET'S GO!

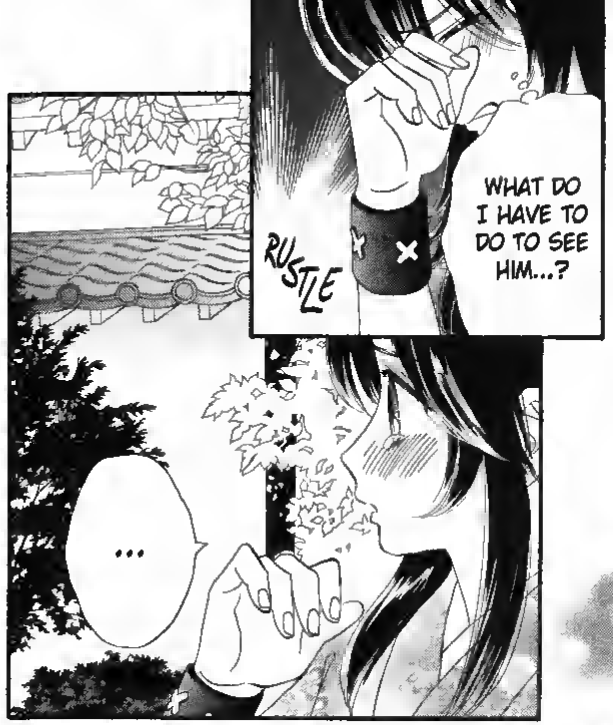
LITTLE HANZO

LITTLE HANZO TRIED HIS BEST TO UNDERSTAND FEMALE PSYCHOLOGY, BUT HE WAS NO MATCH FOR SUZUNE! GOOD LUCK, HANZO!

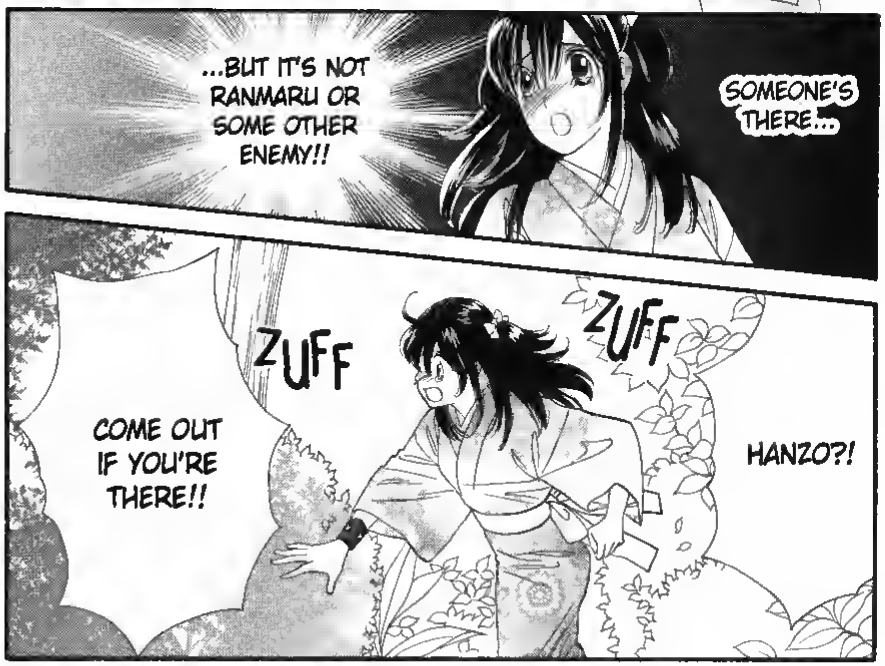
WH... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
YOU WON'T BECOME A FINE NINJA UNLESS YOU LEARN TO GET OVER YOUR DISTRUST OF WOMEN, HANZO.
MM
You've got a lot to learn...
SO I'M SUPPOSED TO COMPLIMENT THEM, HUH?
YOU COMPLIMENT THEM EVERY MORNING AND EVERY NIGHT. ♪
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL TODAY. YOU'RE THE BEST, MY SWEETHEART! ♡
SHA
HANZO.
YOU'RE AS BEAUTIFUL AS ALWAYS !!
OH, SUZUNE !!
I CAME TO PICK YOU UP.
WHAT KIND OF PUNISHMENT DO YOU WANT TODAY?!
ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?
HUH ?
HAN-ZO...
LIFT
ER...

MOSUKE CAN'T LEAVE THE CASTLE ON HIS OWN.
ZWAK
"GO BACK TO OKAZAKI. IF NOT, I WILL CONSIDER YOU MY ENEMY AS WELL."
KEE...?

DOES THAT MEAN THAT HANZO WAS NEARBY?!
KEE?
...WAS LOOKING AT ME FROM SOMEWHERE ...?!
MAYBE HANZO...
HUFF HUFF
I CAN'T FIND HIM...
I CAN'T GO BACK...
RUSTLE
FLIP
GO BACK TO



I CAME HERE TO SEE YOU, HANZO...



...BUT I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE YOU!
I STARTED WORKIN' TODAY WITH ORDERS TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE NEW HERBALIST...
I WON'T.
PLEASE DON'T TELL HIM THAT YOU NOTICED ME THOUGH!
OH...
HE'S AT SAKAI RIGHT NOW.
BY THE WAY, IS MAMEZO AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE?
MOSUKE BROUGHT ME A NOTE FROM HANZO JUST A MOMENT AGO...
OH!
DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HANZO'S WHEREABOUTS, WATARI?
SHA
...SO I WAS REAL GLAD TO FIND OUT THAT YOU GUYS ARE STILL ALIVE.
I THOUGHT EVERYBODY WAS KILLED DURING THE ATTACK ON IGA...

LEMME GO!
WHAT'S THIS MONKEY'S PROBLEM?
WATARI?!
...HERBALIST.
L...
LONG TIME NO SEE...
I WAS PERSONALLY HIRED BY RANMARU.
I THOUGHT THE ODA CLAN DIDN'T HAVE ANY NINJA WORKING FOR THEM...
YOU'RE KEEPING WATCH OVER ME?!
RANMARU ...?

WATARI, I NEED YOU TO HELP ME GET OUT OF AZUCHI CASTLE!!
HUH?!
SHE MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!!
HANZO'S OLDER SISTER!!
THAT'S RIGHT!
FWOOSH
HERBAL-IST...
WHOA.
I'M GOING DOWN TO KOUGA.

WHAT IS IT?!
...IS ACTUALLY A KUNOICHI FROM THE HATTORI CLAN.
THERE'S A RUMOR THAT THE WIFE OF OUR ASSISTANT LEADER...
...
DAD TOLD ME NOT TO TELL ANYBODY ABOUT THIS, BUT...
SIGH...
OH... SORRY...
I REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT...
BUT I JUST GOT A LETTER FROM HANZO...!!
I WAS TOLD THAT ALL THE HIGH-RANKING NINJA OF IGA WERE KILLED...
I DON'T.

WHUMP
AAAGH!
I'M SO HAPPY JUST KNOWING THAT HANZO IS ALIVE SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD.
OWW...
ARE YOU OKAY?
I...
I'M FINE!

...
SHWAAAA
WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO JUMP FROM ALL THE WAY UP HERE.
CAN YOU DO IT, HERBALIST?
YES!
I WON'T HOLD MYSELF BACK.

SHUP
WH...?!
YEAH, RIGHT HERE...
LET ME BORROW IT!
WATARI. DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING SHARP TO CUT WITH?
ZUFF
ZUFF
ZUFF
HEY...!
HERB-ALIST ?!

I WASN'T POSITIVE UNTIL I GOT A GOOD LOOK AT YOUR FACE WHEN YOU CAME OUT TO THE GARDEN THOUGH.
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HANZO.
Sesame dumplings.
YOU WERE FATTER BEFORE AND HAD SHORT HAIR, BUT I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED YOU.
HERBALIST, YOU'VE LOST WEIGHT. YOU'VE BECOME REALLY PRETTY TOO...
HUH?

MY FEELINGS FOR HANZO HAVEN'T CHANGED SINCE THE DAY I MET HIM.
I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL HIM THAT:
THAT'S RIGHT.
I LOVE HIM.
NOW...
LET'S GO TO KOUGA!!

NOW I LOOK LIKE HOW I DID BEFORE, RIGHT?
Thanks for your blade.
YOU REALLY LIKE HANZO, DON'T YOU?
HERB-ALIST...
I WANT HANZO TO KNOW IT'S ME THE MOMENT HE SEES ME.
BUT YOU LOOKED NICE WITH THE LONG HAIR...
UH-HUH...

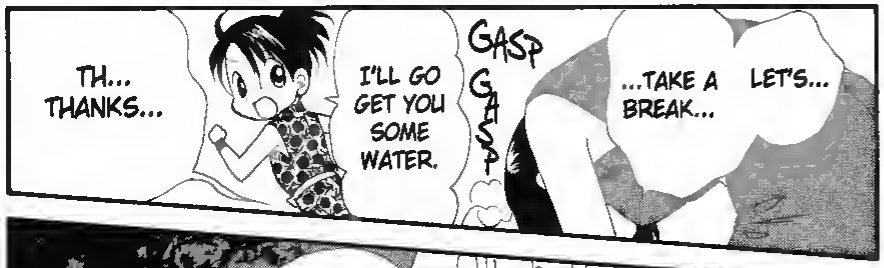
SUZUNE!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?!
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO COME HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT...
I WANTED TO SEE HANZO AGAIN, SO I—
YES.
UNDER LORD NOBU-NAGA ?!
I WORK UNDER LORD NOBUNAGA NOW, SO I CAN ONLY SLIP OUT DURING THE NIGHT...
THIS IS HANZO'S HAND-WRITING !!
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
HANZO ...?!
GO BACK 10 PAGES

DUCK! WATARI!
HUH?
SHK SHK SHK SHK
YEEAGH!
I JUST HOPE...
...SUZUNE KNOWS SOMETHING ABOUT...
IS THAT YOU, USAGI?!
I JUST CAME TO TALK TO MY SISTER-IN-LAW...
WE... WE'RE NOT IN-TRUDERS...

WHETHER IT'S IMPOSSIBLE OR NOT ISN'T THE ISSUE. HE MUSTN'T DO IT.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE THOUGH!
HE'S... ...THINKING ABOUT GETTING REVENGE ON HIS OWN.
REVENGE WILL ONLY BRING ABOUT MORE REVENGE. IT IS A FOOLISH ACT.
GREAT-GRANDPA SAID THE SAME THING TOO...
YOU MUSTN'T LET HIM GET REVENGE.
HELP HIM BREAK FREE FROM THIS VICIOUS CYCLE OF SUFFERING!
PLEASE HELP HANZO FOR ME...
USAGI...

SO SUZUNE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT EITHER ...?
HE'S BEEN ALIVE ALL THIS TIME...!
BUT HE...
HE SENT ME THIS NOTE TODAY.
IT CAN'T BE...
I WAS TOLD THAT HANZO DIED IN THE ATTACK...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
...BUT HE THINKS THAT I'M HIS ENEMY NOW...
I WENT TO AZUCHI TO LOOK FOR HANZO...
HANZO DOESN'T WANT TO INVOLVE YOU IN HIS REVENGE AGAINST THE ODA CLAN.
HE WROTE THIS BECAUSE HE CARES FOR YOU, USAGI.
CARES... ...FOR ME...?

HEEZE... HEEZE...
HEEZE...
I WILL HELP HANZO.
I CAN FEEL MY STRENGTH GATHERING UP INSIDE ME!
I WILL!
BE CAREFUL ON THE WAY HOME.
HERB-ALIST...?
HEEZE... HEEZE...


TH... THANKS...
I'LL GO GET YOU SOME WATER.
GASP
GASP
...TAKE A BREAK...
LET'S...

WHAT BUSINESS DID YOU HAVE IN KOUGA?
MAKING A TRIP TO AND FROM KOUGA IN ONE NIGHT IS TOUGH...

I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN!
HANZO IS...
...SUFFERING ALL ON HIS OWN...?
OKAY!!
I WON'T LET HANZO GET HIS REVENGE!!
THANK YOU!!
IF I FIND ANYTHING OUT ABOUT HANZO, I'LL HAVE WATARI CONTACT YOU.
YOU CAN DO IT, USAGI. I HAVE FAITH IN YOU.

NOTHING, HM? WELL, I'LL MAKE YOU TALK ...
...EVEN IF I HAVE TO TORTURE YOU!
...
I WON'T TELL ANYONE, SO GO AHEAD AND TELL ME.
KRK
AAH!
AAAH!
SOMEBODY...
VISH
VISH
VISH
VISH
URGK!

RANMARU !!
AAAH!
...
BOOSH
WHAT ARE YOU SCHEMING?
?

UWIP
HANZO!!

SHUP
AAGH!
WHAT THE...?!
TCH...
WHO...?
KTCH
...

IT'S NOT A DREAM...!!
MELONS ARE ACTUALLY VEGETABLES
HANZO'S TRIVIA
Tail of the Moon
Chapter 97

LET'S GO!
LITTLE HANZO
HUUUUH?! HANZO AND I MET BEFORE? THEN HIS DISLIKE OF WOMEN SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN BETTER... RIGHT? ♡ BE SURE TO JOIN US NEXT TIME!
I ALREADY HATE THEM...
Come with me..
IF THIS GOES ON, HANZO'S GOING TO BECOME A WOMAN-HATER!!
Where are we going?
DASH
MASTER TANBA... I WANT YOU TO FIX HANZO'S DISLIKE OF WOMEN.
SHUP
HI, HANZOU. HOW'VE YOU BEEN?
WHOA.
WHOA! SHE STINKS !!
WH...?
WAARGH
WAARGH
HOW ABOUT I LEND YOU MY GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER USAGI UNTIL YOU OVERCOME THAT THEN?
BLOOP BLOOP BLOOP
GOOD LUCK!
WAARGH
WAARGH
BUT YOU'RE JUST MAKING ME BABYSIT HER...
AAARGH! STOP CRYING!!
PSHHHH

IF YOU'VE BEEN ALIVE THIS WHOLE TIME...
...WHY DIDN'T YOU COME SEE ME?!
I MISSED YOU SO MUCH...
IT'S BEEN...
...SO DIFFICULT FOR ME.
GO BACK TO OKAZAKI.

IS IT REALLY, REALLY YOU...?
...HANZO?!
GET OFF...
GRP

MY HEART DIED WHEN IGA WAS DESTROYED.
JUST...
...FORGET ABOUT ME.
NO...

HANZO...
YOU'RE GOING AFTER NOBUNAGA, AREN'T YOU?!
DO IT!
WAIT!!
SILENCE!
OF COURSE IT DOES!
I DON'T WANT YOU TO DO ANYTHING DANGEROUS LIKE THAT!
IT DOESN'T CONCERN YOU.

DON'T SAY SUCH A HEART-BREAKING THING...
THERE HASN'T BEEN A DAY...
...WHERE I DON'T THINK ABOUT YOU, HANZO...

I WON'T !!
DO AS I SAY...

DON'T GO!!
I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO SEE YOU...
ZUFF
HANZO...
ZUFF
WAIT!!
ZSHMP
AAAH...
HUFF
HUFF
HE'S ALIVE...
SNIFF...
HNGH...
UNGH...

SHOVE
SO...
AGH...
SH
HANZO...
WE CAN'T RETURN TO THOSE DAYS.

WAAGGHH
TMP
I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERY-WHERE FOR YOU...
HERB-ALIST!

BUT I'VE LOST HIM AGAIN...
SNIFF...
NO...
ZOOOO!

YOU SHOULD HAVE RUN OFF TO OKAZAKI WITH HER.
I CAN'T DO THAT.

I ALREADY MADE UP MY MIND TO BECOME THE DEVIL HIMSELF...

COLD-HEARTED, AREN'T YOU.

THAT GIRL IS RELUCTANTLY WORKING UNDER NOBUNAGA JUST FOR THE CHANCE TO SEE YOU, YOU KNOW.

YOU CAN'T DIE!!
HANG IN THERE!!
GRAB
!!
...!
THEY ALL WANT YOU TO LIVE.
YOU'VE GOT TO UNDER-STAND THAT.

KRSHAA
MASTER HANZO, YOU MUST ESCAPE!!
WE'LL CUT THEM OFF HERE.
...TO AVENGE THOSE WHO DIED IN VAIN PROTECTING ME...
YOU MUSTN'T !!
I'LL FIGHT TOO!
LET ME GO!
ARGH...
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
URGH!

I'LL KILL NOBUNAGA NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES.

YOU CAN THANK YOUR BRIDE-ELECT THEN. I SIMPLY HAD A DEBT TO PAY.
IT WAS A MAJOR PAIN IN THE NECK...
...SAVING YOU BACK THERE.
I NEVER ASKED YOU TO SAVE ME.

TAKE CARE OF IT.
YOU'RE LUCKY TO STILL HAVE YOUR LIFE.
SHUT UP!
NO ONE CAN GO AGAINST NOBUNAGA NOW ANYWAY.

HANZO ISN'T THE KIND OF PERSON WHO'D EASILY CHANGE HIS MIND.
"MY HEART DIED WHEN IGA WAS DESTROYED."
HOW CAN I STOP HANZO FROM GETTING HIS REVENGE ...?
AND HOW CAN I GET HANZO BACK?

RANMARU KNOWS I'VE BEEN TALKING TO YOU, SO HE'S GOING TO BE ANGRY...
HERBALIST, WHAT AM I GONNA DO...?
I WON'T LET RANMARU LAY A FINGER ON YOU.
JUST STAY BY MY SIDE, WATARI.
HERBAL-IST...
ZZZ...

SCAN
SCAN
SHUP
THEN... PLEASE BE CAREFUL WITH IT.
I WILL!
I'LL KILL NOBUNAGA MYSELF!!

WHOA!
BUMP
AGH!
HOW CAN I...?
I'M SORRY...
PLEASE BE CAREFUL.
IS THAT LORD NOBUNAGA'S BREAKFAST?
YES...
THEN I'LL TAKE IT TO HIM.
BUT THIS IS MY JOB...
I'VE BEEN ORDERED TO BECOME HIS FOOD TASTER STARTING TODAY.
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, YOU CAN ASK LORD NOBUNAGA HIMSELF.
OH ?!

SADA-NARI.
TASTE IT.
YES, MY LORD.
YOUR PAGE ASKED ME TO BRING THIS TO YOU...

I CAN DISTINGUISH EVEN THE SLIGHTEST OF POISONS, YOU SEE.
I'LL TASTE IT FOR YOU THEN.
I CAN'T LET ANYBODY ELSE EAT IT!!

THE POISON HAS NO EFFECT ON ME...
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH IT.
MNCH MNCH
GULP
SHp
FINE...
BUT DON'T PUT YOUR MOUTH ON THE BOWL.
Y... YES, SIR.

KRK
ONCE NOBUNAGA IS DEAD, HANZO WON'T BE ABLE TO GET HIS REVENGE.
THEN I'LL BE ABLE TO GET HANZO BACK!!

WHY ARE YOU...?
!

FOR GOD'S SAKE...
GOOD-BYE, ODA NOBUNAGA.

...BUT IT'S STRONG ENOUGH FOR AN ORDINARY PERSON TO DIE FROM IT.

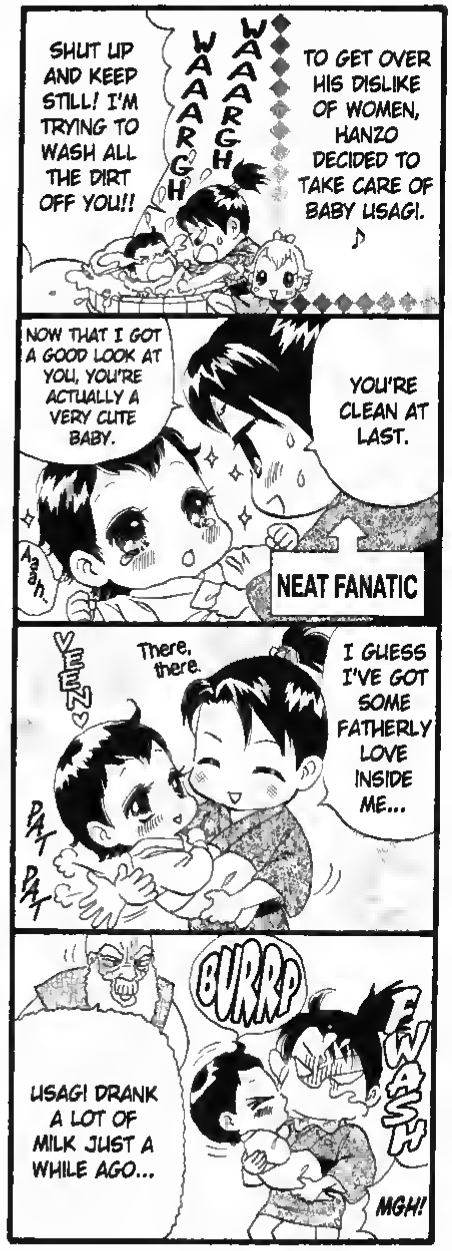
...SO IT WILL TAKE A WHILE FOR THE POISON TO TAKE EFFECT.
IT'S NOT INSTANTA-NEOUS...

I'LL BE FINE AS LONG AS I GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE POISON STARTS WORKING.

TH-THUMP TH-THUMP
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE THE MORNING...
WHERE'S RANMARU?
AH.

LET'S GO!

LITTLE HANZO


SHUT UP AND KEEP STILL! I'M TRYING TO WASH ALL THE DIRT OFF YOU!!
WAAARGH
WAAARGH
TO GET OVER HIS DISLIKE OF WOMEN, HANZO DECIDED TO TAKE CARE OF BABY USAGI. ♪
NOW THAT I GOT A GOOD LOOK AT YOU, YOU'RE ACTUALLY A VERY CUTE BABY.
YOU'RE CLEAN AT LAST.
Ahh.
NEAT FANATIC
YEN♡
There, there.
I GUESS I'VE GOT SOME FATHERLY LOVE INSIDE ME...
PAT PAT
USAGI DRANK A LOT OF MILK JUST A WHILE AGO...
BURRP
SWASH
MGH!

SHFF
SHFF
I'M SORRY I'M LATE!!
LORD NOBU-NAGA...
NO, I CAN'T ...!!
RANMARU...
I'M SORRY FOR BEING LATE. I OVER-SLEPT.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO OVERSLEEP, RANMARU.
HE'S LYING.
AAGH
RANMARU WAS INJURED WHEN HANZO THREW THAT NINJA STAR AT HIM...

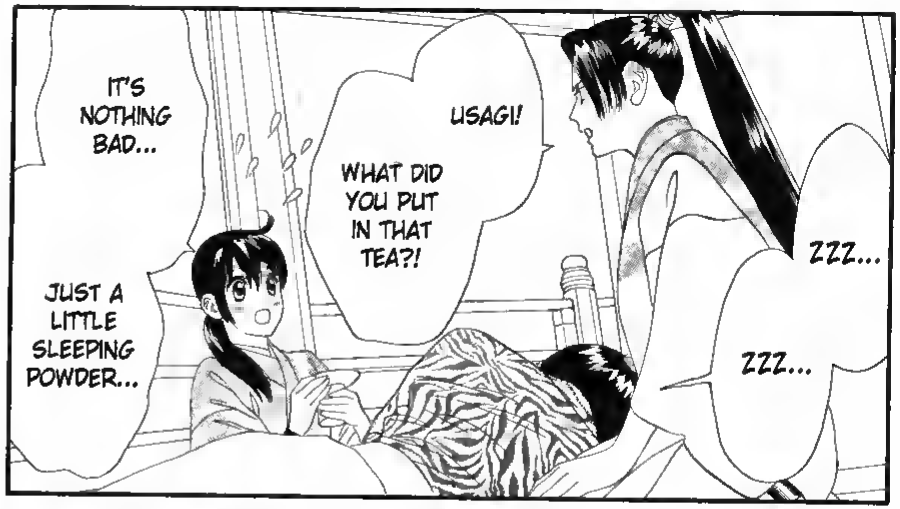
GOODBYE...

IT WORKED OUT FOR THE BEST IN THE END...

MY LORD?
I'LL HAVE SOME.
HERE.
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA?
SIP
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
AH. IT'S GOOD TEA.
...
?!
FWUMP
ZZZ...
YES, SIR.
RANMARU...
LEND ME YOUR LAP.

WELL, THAT'S WHAT DAD TOLD ME.
HE STAYS AWAKE THINKING ABOUT THE NEXT BATTLE AND ABOUT POLITICS...
NEVER SLEEPS...?
You startled me...
I HEARD LORD NOBUNAGA NEVER SLEEPS.
WATARI...
POP
HMM...
EXCUSE ME...

HIS PAST ENEMIES...
HIS NEW ENEMIES...
...IS AN EXTREMELY TOLERANT MAN. HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL STATUS OR YOUR PAST AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THE SKILLS TO DO WHAT IT TAKES.
HE WOULD EVEN HIRE MILITARY COMMANDERS WHO USED TO BE HIS ENEMY...
HE IS PUTTING HIS HEART AND SOUL INTO HIS WORK SO THAT HE CAN UNITE EVERYONE AS ONE.
...LORD NOBUNAGA IS THE GOD OF THIS NEW WORLD.
BUT TO ME...
THERE ARE THOSE WHO FEAR HIM AND THINK OF HIM AS BEING A DEMON, A FIEND...


IT'S NOTHING BAD...
JUST A LITTLE SLEEPING POWDER...
USAGI!
WHAT DID YOU PUT IN THAT TEA?!
ZZZ...
ZZZ...

LORD NOBUNAGA...
INSOMNIA IS AN ILLNESS WHERE YOU CAN'T SLEEP EVEN IF YOU WANTED TO, SO I THOUGHT I'D...
I WAS TOLD THAT LORD NOBUNAGA HARDLY EVER SLEEPS...
SLEEPING POWDER ?!
...SO I THOUGHT HE HAD INSOMNIA.

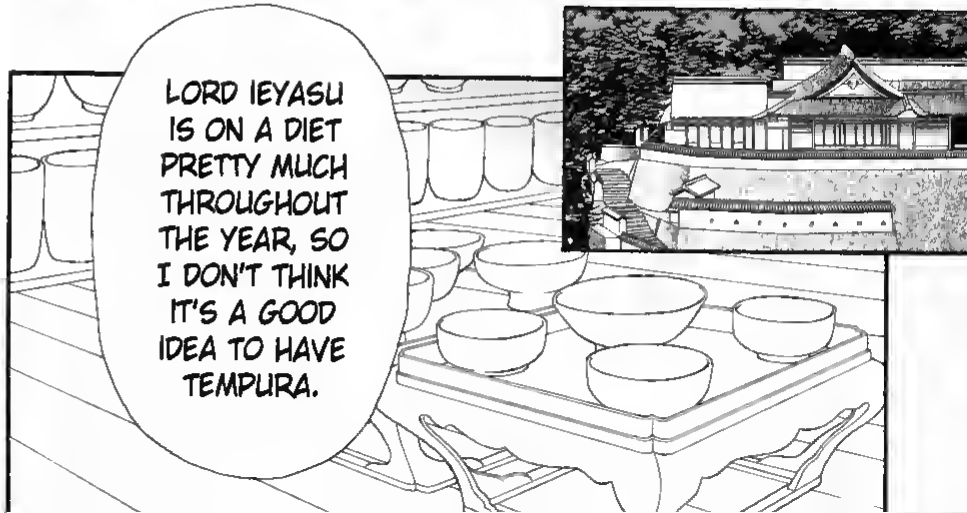
WHEN I WAS LOOKING AT HIM FROM THE OUTSIDE, NOBUNAGA WAS AN ENEMY WHOM I HATED.
STRANGE ...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR SAYING SO.
BUT, NOW THAT I'VE SEEN HIM UP CLOSE...
...HE SEEMS VERY DIFFERENT.

NEW WORLD ...?
MM...
SHUP
DON'T YOU WANT TO SLEEP A LITTLE LONGER?
NO... I FEEL A LOT BETTER.
P... PLEASE EXCUSE ME.
WHAT ... YOU'RE STILL HERE?
THE TEA WAS GOOD.
HE'S STILL SCARY.
SHFF
SHFF
MAKE ME SOME AGAIN SOME-TIME.

MITSU-HIDE...
HOW ARE YOUR EYES DOING?
WHISPER
SEA BREAM IT IS...
LORD IEYASU LOVES SEA BREAM, SO THAT'S PERFECT!
THEN WHAT ABOUT GRILLED SEA BREAM WITH SALT?
I'M FINE.
PHEW
MITSUHIDE.
HIROKO !!
THIS IS MY WIFE, HIROKO...
OH...
YES, I AM.
ARE YOU USAGI, THE HERBALIST, BY CHANCE?
I CAME TO HELP YOU.

A FEW DAYS LATER
KEE.
LORD IEYASU IS COMING?!
MITSUHIDE WILL BE THE HOST. HE SEEMS BUSY, SO WHY DON'T YOU HELP HIM?

I CAN TALK TO LORD IEYASU ABOUT HANZO.
ALL RIGHT!


LORD IEYASU IS ON A DIET PRETTY MUCH THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, SO I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE TEMPURA.

HOW NICE.
LET'S WORK HARD TOGETHER SO THAT HIS JOB WILL BE A SUCCESSFUL ONE.
I WISH HANZO AND I COULD BE LIKE THEM...
I'VE HEARD THAT MITSUHIDE DOESN'T HAVE ANY CONCUBINES AND THAT HE'S FULLY DEVOTED TO HIS WIFE, HIROKO.
THEY REALLY ARE A FINE COUPLE, AREN'T THEY.
WELL...
I WANTED TO BE OF SOME HELP TO HIM SOME-HOW.
I JUST COULDN'T STAY PUT AT SAKAMOTO CASTLE.

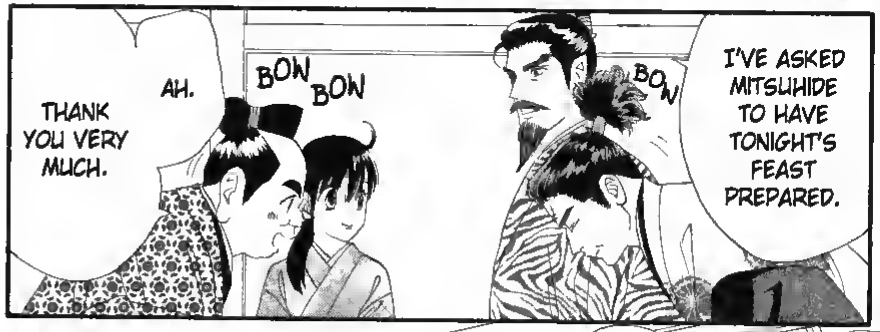
I'LL GO AND ORDER THE SEA BREAM RIGHT AWAY!
AT ANY RATE, I'M GLAD YOU CAME TO HELP ME.
GOOD LUCK.
YOU MUSTN'T TALK ABOUT THAT HERE.
THE MEDICINE YOU MADE FOR MY HUSBAND ...
OH...
I'M SORRY.

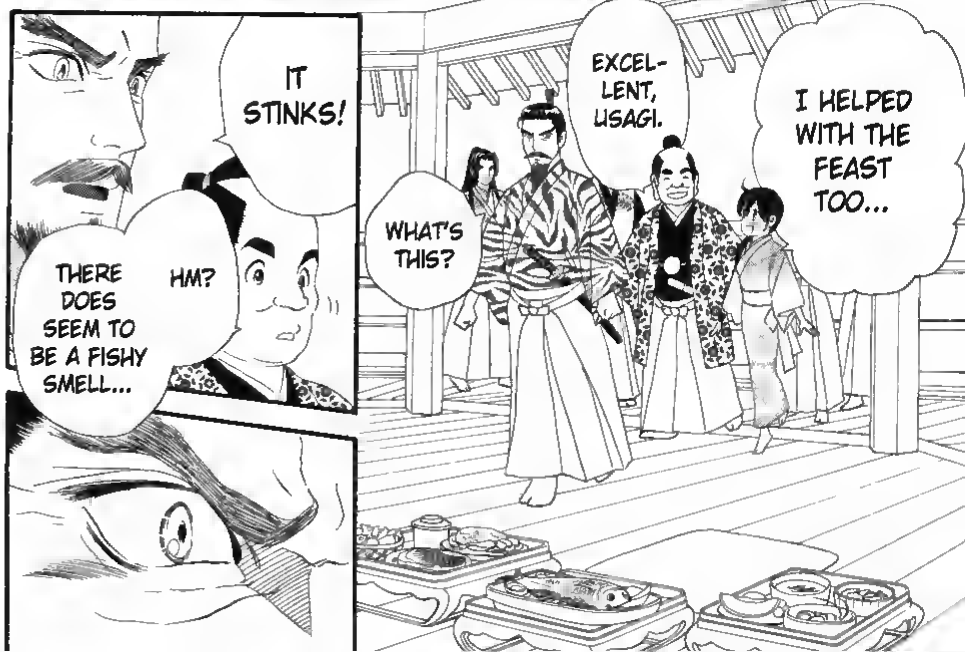
HE MUST REALLY WANT THIS FEAST TO BE SUCCESSFUL SINCE IT'S HIS FIRST LARGE ASSIGNMENT AFTER HIS SUSPENSION.
MITSUHIDE'S REALLY WORKING HARD, ISN'T HE!

HIROKO...
HOW LORD NOBUNAGA IS DISPLEASED WITH MY HUSBAND...
YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT IT IF YOU WORK HERE, DON'T YOU?

WHOOP
WHY WAS A RAW SEA BREAM PLACED HERE?!
THAT'S IM-POSSIBLE...
MITSUHIDE !!
I'M SORRY, MY LORD!!

LORD IEYASU...
WELCOME, IEYASU.
USAGI!
YOU LOOK GREAT!!
THREE DAYS LATER


AH.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
BOW BOW
BOW
I'VE ASKED MITSUHIDE TO HAVE TONIGHT'S FEAST PREPARED.


IT STINKS!
HM?
THERE DOES SEEM TO BE A FISHY SMELL...
WHAT'S THIS?
EXCEL-LENT, USAGI.
I HELPED WITH THE FEAST TOO...

CHAK
WIPE
WIPE
NGH...
SNIFF...
YOU NEEDN'T CRY, USAGI.
BUT...
YOU...
YOU DID HAVE THE FEAST READY.
BUT HE WOULDN'T EVEN LISTEN...
HOW COULD HE...?
WHY DIDN'T YOU ARGUE WITH HIM?!
IT'S OVER AND DONE WITH.

KATTER
CAN'T YOU EVEN GET A SIMPLE FEAST READY?!
I'LL HAVE SOMEONE ELSE PREPARE A FEAST RIGHT AWAY.
IEYASU...
OH NO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT...
MITSU-HIDE...
YOU'RE USELESS!
THIS HAS TO BE A MISTAKE.
MITSUHIDE DID GET THE FEAST PROPERLY READY...
IT IS MY MISTAKE!!
NO!!

THE SPIRIT OF FORGIVENESS...
TO NOT GET ANGRY...
"REVENGE WILL ONLY BRING ABOUT MORE REVENGE. IT IS A FOOLISH ACT."
"WE'RE GOING TO SIT BACK AND ENJOY WHAT KIND OF COUNTRY NOBUNAGA'S GOING TO CREATE, RIGHT?"

YOU ALWAYS LET HIM SAY WHAT HE WANTS...
LORD NOBUNAGA DEPENDS ON ME.
IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT THAT WAY, THERE'S NOTHING TO GET ANGRY ABOUT, RIGHT?

OMI, SAKAMOTO CASTLE
IT'S NOT GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH TO BE EXPOSED TO THE NIGHT WIND.
MOTHER...
I'M PRAYING.
I PRAY...
...THAT YOUR FATHER'S WORK WILL BE SUCCESS-FUL...

WHAT IS IT?!
WAAARGH!
I...
I FINALLY UNDER-STAND...
REVENGE WON'T SOLVE ANY-THING.
...FOR HIS OWN SAKE!!
THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO STOP HANZO ...
MITSU-HIDE...
THANK YOU...

BUT...
IZUMO BELONGS TO THE ENEMY...!
THAT'S WHY HE SAID, "DESTROY THE MOURI CLAN AND SEIZE IT..."
BUT THAT'S ...!!
PLEASE LEAVE SAKAMOTO CASTLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
TO BE CONTINUED...

AND...
...I HOPE HE WILL BE SAFE AND SOUND IN AZUCHI...
I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM LORD NOBUNAGA.
MAY I READ IT TO YOU HERE?
SURE...
"THE LANDS OF OMI AND TANBA WHICH MITSUHIDE CURRENTLY HOLDS WILL BE TAKEN..."
"...AND HIS NEW DOMAIN WILL BE IZUMO OF THE SANIN AREA."
TAKEN...?
HE'S DEPRIVING MITSUHIDE OF HIS LAND?!
...

Page 92, panel 6: Sakamoto
Sakamoto is a small village in Shiga prefecture (once known as Omi province). In 1571, Mitsuhide Akechi was awarded the Sakamoto estate for serving Oda Nobunaga.

Page 115, panel 4: Sakai
Sakai is a city in Osaka prefecture that is one of the largest and most important seaports in Japan. Once known for samurai swords, Sakai is now famous for quality kitchen knives and other cutlery.

Page 116, panel 5: Kunoichi
A term often used for female ninja. The word is spelled くノ一, and when combined, the letters form the kanji for woman, 女。

The woys of the ninjo are mysterious indeed, so here is o glossory of terms to help you navigate the intricocies of their world.

Page 2: Ranmaru Mori
Ranmaru Mori is one of Oda Nobunaga's most famous vassals. He became Nobunaga's attendant at a young age and was recognized for his talent and loyalty.

Page 8, panel 1: Azuchi Castle
Azuchi Castle was one of Oda Nobunaga's main castles. It is located on the shores of Lake Biwa in Shiga prefecture. The castle's strategic location enabled Nobunaga to manage his foes more easily, namely the Uesugi clan to the north and the Moun clan to the west.

Page 10, panel 1: Konnyaku
Konnyaku is a traditional Japanese jelly-like health food made from the starch of the "devil's tongue" plant (a relative of the sweet potato).

Page 41, panel 5: Nokotta
Along with "hakkeyoi," "nokotta" is an expression used by the referee in sumo to keep the wrestlers going.

Page 44, panel 1: Mitsuhide Akechi
Mitsuhide Akechi became one of Oda Nobunaga's retainers after Nobunaga's conquest of Mino province (now Gifu prefecture) in 1566. He is known to have been more of an intellectual and a pacifier than a warrior.

Page 2: Oda Nobunaga
Oda Nobunaga lived from 1534 to 1582, and came close to unifying Japan. He is probably one of the most famous Japanese warlords. He was the first warlord to successfully incorporate the gun in battle and is notorious for his ruthlessness.

Page 2: Iga
Iga is a region on the island of Honshu and also the name of the famous ninja clan that originated there. Another area famous for its ninja is Kouga, in the Shiga prefecture on Honshu. Many books claim that these two ninja clans were mortal enemies, but in reality inter-ninja relations were not as bad as stories might suggest.

Page 2: Tokugawa Ieyasu
Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616) was the first Shogun of the Tokugawa Shogunate. He made a small fishing village named Edo the center of his activities. Edo thrived and became a huge town, and was later renamed Tokyo, the present capital.

Page 2: Okazaki Castle
Okazaki Castle is in the city of Okazaki in Aichi prefecture. This castle was home to various leaders throughout history, including Tokugawa Ieyasu. Though demolished in 1873, the castle was reconstructed in 1959.

Nobunaga finally makes his appearance. When drawing people who actually existed, you end up creating something like a history tutorial manga if you're not careful. Since this story is fiction, I've added my own flavor of personalities to the characters to make it more dramatic.

–Rinko Ueda

Rinko Ueda is from Nara prefecture. She enjoys listening to the radio, drama CDs, and Rakugo comedy performances. Her works include *Ryo*, a series based on the legend of Gojo Bridge; *Home*, a story about love crossing national boundaries; and *Tail of the Moon (Tsuki no Shippo)*, a romantic ninja comedy.